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# Spy ring damage 'incalculable,' STAT court told

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LONDON — The prosecution in the spy trial of seven British servicemen yesterday termed the damage from their alleged traffic in military secrets "incalculable."

The proceedings then moved behind the closed doors of an Old Bailey courtroom.

One prosecutor said the seven turned over secrets "by the bagful" from a signals intelligence post on Cyprus. What the damage involved no one was saying publicly. The trial opened on Monday.

The men — five in the Royal Air Force and two in the British army — were blackmailed into handing over military secrets between February 1982 and February 1984 by several people, including one who reportedly identified himself as a KGB major, according to the prosecution.

The unit the men belonged to is the 9th Signals Regiment, based at Aylos Nikalaos and in the mountains at Troodos, where five of them worked as telegraphists. According to a British defense analyst, the two places are SIGINT (signals intelligence) listening posts connected directly to British intelligence in London and the National Security Agency in Washington.

They cover Soviet, Bulgarian and Romanian ship, aircraft and signals traffic in the Black Sea and beyond; the North African coast, including Libya, and in particular the Middle East, including Iran and Iraq.

Because there are already good listening posts on the Turkish coast of the Black Sea, it is thought likely the Cyprus base focuses particularly on Israel, Syria and the Lebanon. According to the prosecution's opening statements in the trial, secrets were being passed on by the defendants before, during and after the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

But there is little evidence that Israel is worried by any disclosures. Staffers at the Jerusalem Post said yesterday they were unaware of any interest in the London spy case in the Israeli capital.

There was speculation yesterday in London, too, that the "exceptional dam-

age to the interests of this nation" mentioned by the British prosecutor might be an exaggeration. There is a tendency in Britain to overclassify government information, and the British press played up the sordid and sensational details of the case outlined in the opening statements.

The tabloid Daily Mail devoted most of its first three pages to a description of how Airman Geoffrey Jones, 20, according to the prosecution, was first seduced by an Arab called John in a Larnaca nightclub, then photographed with him and two other Arabs in a homosexual romp.

In its opening statement, the prosecution said Airman Jones was threatened with exposure and instructed to recruit others in his unit for a homosexual spy

ring. He was described as personally responsible for passing on some 200 top-secret documents and 800 documents described as secret or confidential.

Most newspapers — including the Daily Telegraph — detailed the alleged fetishes of two of the servicemen for wearing women's panties, told of one defendant's wife being forced into a sex orgy, and reported the alleged infatuation Airman Jones had with a Filipino singer called Josie.

According to the prosecution, the KGB used Josie to involve other members of her group, The Ladybirds, in providing sexual favors for the seven servicemen. A publicity photograph of Josie and her scantily clad Ladybirds was prominently displayed by The Mail.

One of the servicemen, Wayne Kriehn, 20, according to the prosecution, was recruited by being plied with drink and offered a member of the Ladybirds to take to bed. He then committed unnatural acts with a Cypriot male who replaced her, the prosecution contended.

After he finished, according to the prosecution account, Mr. Kriehn went downstairs, where he was asked by a man named Alex if he wanted to return. Alex later identified himself as a KGB major, according to the prosecution, and said he had a photograph of Mr. Kriehn with the Cypriot.

The suspected spy ring came to the attention of British officials after Airman Jones delayed doing routine work before his scheduled return to England. According to the prosecution, he said the reason was that he wanted to stay with Josie — a violation of standing regulations for servicemen at the base to avoid close friendships with foreigners.

The trial is the latest in a series of spy embarrassments for Britain, coming weeks after Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher announced a major shakeup of the nation's counterespionage organization.

In a new book publicized in Britain yesterday, former CIA Director Stansfield Turner described Britain's counter-intelligence policies as "naive, unworkable and dangerous" in contrast to the U.S. spy-catching record, which Adm. Turner rated "exceptionally good."

But that was before the latest U.S. spy case involving a Navy family in Norfolk, Va.

British Home Secretary Leon Brittan countered a question from The Washington Times yesterday about Britain's spy-catching record with the comment: "There seems to be the odd problem in the U.S. at the moment."

He said the security commission that recommended to Mrs. Thatcher new controls on counterintelligence personnel concluded "there was no operational damage to the security service."

"I am not being complacent. . . . I can assure you these issues are being taken very seriously and go right to the top. . . . The British security services are fully effective," he told The Washington Times.